



THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20590

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The Honorable Robert C. McFarlane
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Washington, D.C. 20500

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Dear Bud:

The U. S. Coast Guard recently developed and promulgated a security classification guide for information related to the illicit international movement of controlled substances. The guide was of course developed pursuant to Executive Order 12356, National Security Information, and is consistent with that order and Executive Order 12333, United States Intelligence Activities. It was approved by the Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO), which monitors implementation of E. O. 12356.

During their lengthy endeavor to develop the guide, the Coast Guard was made aware of an apparent disparity between the two executive orders. They were advised by ISOO that information on international drug trafficking is law enforcement information, not national security information, and therefore should not be classified under E. O. 12356. On the other hand, E. O. 12333 appears to state quite clearly that international narcotics trafficking is a matter of national security interest. The Intelligence Community has been tasked in section 1.4(c) of that order to "conduct intelligence activities necessary for the conduct of foreign relations and the protection of the national security of the United States, including . . . collection of information concerning, and the conduct of activities to protect against . . . international narcotics activities."

It seems likely the President intended the two orders to be complementary and harmonious with each other, even though it is possible to view them as inconsistent or unrelated. I see this as a very important policy matter with far reaching implications, and I would appreciate your opinion. Under what circumstances is international narcotics trafficking considered a matter of national security, with information pertaining thereto thus classifiable? Your assistance in this vital security matter is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Hanford Dole